

Kelli Carmean. *Spider Woman Walks This Land: Traditional Cultural Properties and the Navajo Nation*. Walnut Creek CA: AltaMira Press, 2002. xx + 175 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$70.00, paper, \$24.95.

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The two main goals of this volume are, first, to introduce the student or interested citizen to the legal concept of traditional cultural properties, and second, to be a "brief but nevertheless stand-alone introductory ethnography of the Navajo" (xi). It is a noteworthy success on both counts, and exemplifies the mission of AltaMira's Contemporary Native American Communities series, by keeping Navajo cultural and political concerns at the forefront of the analysis. It is accessible, not just as an anthropology or archaeology textbook but also as a study of Navajo cultural geography, history, and religion. Dr. Kelli Carmean, an Anglo archaeologist working for the tribe (on sabbatical from Eastern Kentucky University) and a student at (mostly-Navajo) Diné College, is an ethnographer who has acknowledged her Navajo contacts as colleagues and friends.

Beginning with a detailed introduction to Navajo cultural history and specific traditional Navajo properties, Carmean follows with a discussion of the legal history of the management of such properties. From there a look at the recent economic history of the Navajo Nation helps the reader to contextualize the debates between the traditional and nontraditional forces within the tribe concerning the priorities assigned to various natural and cultural resources. After addressing the tribal government's approach to resource management, the concluding chapter examines cultural properties of varying geographic scale within the Navajo context and applies some of the issues raised at other Indigenous cultural properties (including Uluru/Ayer's Rock, Australia).

One important and recurring theme concerns political and ideological disagreement within and between groups sharing the same properties, whether Anglo, Athapaskan, or Pueblo. Carmean does not gloss over such conflicts by suggesting easy answers. Nor does she portray them as insurmountable obstacles. Rather it is through an examination of the way different cultures view the sanctity of space that a productive understanding may be achieved. A quarter century ago the U.S. Forest Service saw the expansion of downhill skiing facilities on the San Francisco Peaks as a fair compromise with Native interests within a multiple-use framework (134–41). The Navajo and Hopi disagreed with the ruling, not due to a contentious nature but because their traditional cultural properties cannot be moved in the same way that Anglo religious sites often can. By understanding the Navajo conception of the original and timeless sanctity of the landscape and its features, one begins to understand the dichotomous tension between perspectives of traditional versus nontraditional Navajo, and between cultural resource management strategies seeking the avoidance of impacts versus those seeking the mitigation of impacts.

The Navajo, like many Indigenous groups, are internally divided on contemporary

economic issues and the relative importance of traditional cultural properties. The oil, coal, timber, uranium, tourism, and gambling industries have (or could have) greatly enriched the coffers of the Navajo Nation. Many with traditional views argue that such industries cause more harm to the landscape than is returned in the form of economic wealth and that the health of the landscape can greatly affect the health of the Diné. One area where many parties can agree is on the need to make safe the hundreds of toxic uranium mines, that have stood idle since the middle of the Cold War. While these sites are significant to U.S. history, that does not mitigate their potentially lethal side effects, and few (if any) Navajo would argue for their preservation.

As the author has skillfully traversed the rocky terrain between politically charged perspectives on landscape use, so she has done with politically charged perspectives on the timing of the Athapaskan migration, ancestral to the Navajo. She conveys the view that the Navajo may have been in the Southwest prior to 1300 CE, while she nonetheless suggests that they are "relative newcomers" (2). In this way she retains scholarly credibility while placing great respect upon Navajo oral traditions. There need not be mutually exclusive scholarly and traditional perspectives on the origin of a people if one allows for multiple interpretations of the same events.

Italicized journal entries are interspersed throughout the book, describing the author's experiences among the Navajo and upon their sacred landscape. In places these are manifestly appropriate, as when they convey Navajo perspectives on historical events discussed in the main text. Elsewhere the transitions are less smooth, but they consistently address the important themes within a given chapter. The later entries provide interesting real life examples, which dovetail with some of the less interesting points of bureaucratic history.

Spider Woman and her home of Spider Rock, in Canyon de Chelly, are the "continuing narrative threads" of the book, despite their nearly clichéd status among Navajo scholars (x). This is a wise choice; from the prologue to the epilogue, a spider's web is formed in which a general audience may observe the interconnectedness of geography, culture, and spirituality persisting from the Navajo creation era to the present. The reality of a global, industrial economy requires a delicate process of negotiation for the economic health of the community, but it is not necessary, therefore, to uproot living traditions.

**John Shurts. *Indian Reserved Water Rights: The Winters Doctrine in Its Social and Legal Context, 1880s–1930s*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000. xv + 333 pp. Paper, \$21.95.**

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In *Indian Reserved Water Rights* John Shurts analyzes the pivotal case in 1908 that established the doctrine of reserved water rights for Indian reservations. This topic will